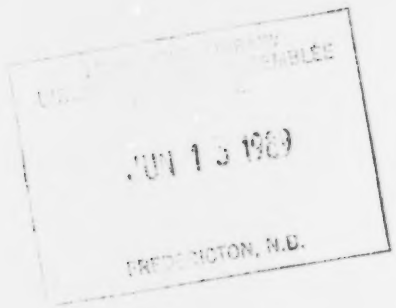
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:
USE OF COCAINE/CRACK AMONG CLIENTS ADMITTED TO A.D.D.C. TREATMENT FACILITIES JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31, 1989



Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Commission
of New Brunswick

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Elaine Campbell, M.A.
Coordinator of Research

Ron McHugh, M.A.
Director of Treatment Services

SUMMARY

During the three months that the cocaine/crack survey was run in the Commission's treatment centres, 787 admissions were recorded. Of these admissions, 725 responded to questions pertaining to their use of a drug which they believed to be cocaine and/or crack.

Of the 725 respondents, 82.5% were male and 17.5% were female. One hundred and thirteen (113), or 15.6% of respondents, reported that they had used cocaine in the three month period prior to this survey. Similar to the total sample, 82.3% of cocaine users were male and 17.7% were female.

Cocaine users were younger than the treatment clientele in general: 5% of the "users" were 18 years of age or younger and 57% of the "users" were in the 19 to 29 year age group. No "users" reported being over the age of 49 years.

Of interest is the distribution of the frequency of reported use, which was similar across all levels of consumption, ie. any one user was almost as likely to be a "heavy" user as he/she was to be an "experimenter". Among the 113 reported cocaine users, 26% had used the drug once or twice in the previous three months, 19% had used it once or twice a month during that time period, 20% had used it once or twice a week, 15% had used it three or four times a week, and 20% reported having used cocaine five or more times a week during the three month period prior to this survey.

The most popular route of administration for the drug was by "snorting", with 41.6% of cocaine users reporting that they had "snorted" the drug. The next most popular route of administration was by "needle", with 21.2% of the users reporting having injected cocaine. A combination of smoking and "snorting" cocaine was the third most popular way of administering the drug. Injection was

more popular among females than among males, with 35% of the female users reporting that they used a needle to administer cocaine. The distribution of reported users was fairly similar across the province, with exception of Newcastle. In other words, a drug that users believe to be cocaine is available across the entire province, rather than in small pockets. Tracadie Treatment Centre reported the highest percentage of cocaine users among their respondents, with 20.8% of their 77 respondents reported having used cocaine in the three months prior to admission. Edmundston Treatment followed closely with 14 of their 69 respondents (20.3%) reporting cocaine use. The lowest percentage of cocaine users was reported among the clientele of the Newcastle Treatment Centre, where only 7.1% of respondents reported cocaine use.

Overall, 15.6% of those admissions who responded to the survey reported cocaine use in the three months prior to admission to a treatment program.

While the highest proportion of users were reported in the Tracadie and Edmundston centres, the more frequent users were found at Ridgewood, where 31% of the 32 users reported using cocaine more often than five times per week in the period prior to admission. Fredericton Treatment followed with a quarter of their 16 users reporting using more than five times per week.

Of the total sample, 23.3% reported having a job as their major means of financial support, 38% relied upon Public Assistance and 22.4% were on U.I.C. Among the cocaine users only 15.9% reported having a job, 39.8% were on Public Assistance, 27.4% were on U.I.C. and 7% reported that they had no source of income.

USE OF NEEDLES

While 31 of the 113 cocaine users (27.4%) reported having used a needle, either alone or in combination with some other method of

administration, when using cocaine, a total of 39 respondents reported having used a needle to administer any street drug. In other words, while over a quarter of the cocaine users have used a needle to administer their drug, only 5.4% of the total respondents reported having used a needle to administer any street drugs.

Of the 39 needle users, 11 were female (28%) and 28 were male (72%). Females are over represented among needle users when it is considered that females make up less than eighteen percent of the sample.

About three quarters of the needle users had grade ten education or better. Half of this group reported that they were single. Results of this survey suggest that needle users are somewhat older than the average cocaine user, are much less likely to have a job (only one respondent of 39 reported having a job) and are more likely to be reliant upon public assistance (64%) for their financial support.

APPENDIX A

RATIONALE: Because increased cocaine use has been reported among detox clientele in Nova Scotia, the New Brunswick Commission has decided that this is an appropriate time to look into the cocaine withdrawal situation in it's own treatment centres. Also of interest is the question of the incidence of IV drug use, and it was decided that this would be an o=portune occasion to ask a question about this issue.

INSTRUMENT: For this survey we will be using the Client Questionnaire as the data collection instrument. The C.Q. has the "Sample Questions" box in the centre of the form. This area has been reserved specifically for use in this type of survey. Please note that this box is completed in the same manner as any other section of the form, ie. by using an HB pencil and shading in the circle under the letter corresponding to the answer given to each question.

WHEN: Data collection will begin at 0800 hours on January 3, 1989 and will continue until 1600 hours on March 31, 1989.

WHO: The survey will be administered to all admissions (including multiple admissions) to treatment centres during the January to March time frame. O.P.D. and Rehab program admissions will not be included in the present survey.

SURVEY STAFF: Because of the sensitivity of the subject area, head nurses will be responsible for the administration of the survey to clients. In the head nurse's absence (eg. on weekends, vacation days, etc.), the head nurse at each centre will designate another nurse to survey any new admissions.

APPENDIX B

Survey Instrument

1) In the past three months have you used a drug that you believe to be cocaine or crack?

A. Yes
B. No
C. Refused to answer

If "Yes" ask questions #2, #3 and #4; if "No" or "refused to answer" ask question #4 only.

2) How often have you used it during the past three months?

A. once or twice
B. one or two times a month
C. one or two times a week
D. three or four times a week
E. five or more times a week

3) How did you take it?

A. smoked it
B. snorted it
C. used a needle
D. freebased
E. all of above

4) Have you used a needle to give yourself any street drug(s) in the last three months?

A. Yes
B. No
C. Refused to answer